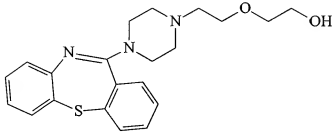
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

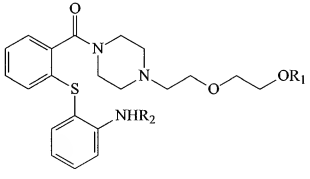
Listing of Claims:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for the preparation of the compound of formula I or a salt thereof:



I

by cyclization of a compound of formula II or a salt thereof:



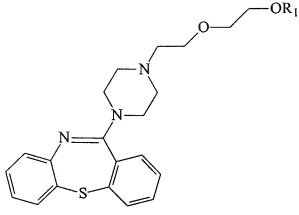
II

wherein R_1 is a hydroxyl protecting group selected from the group consisting of

acetyl, benzoyl, pivaloyl, benzyl, 4-methoxybenzyl, allyl, tetrahydropyranyl, silyl, alkyl carbonate, aryl carbonate, aralkyl carbonate, benzyl carbonate, allylsulfonyl, benzylsulfonyl, and toluenesulfonyl, and **[[**R2**]]**

R_2 is H or a suitable amino protecting group~~, e. g. acetyl, pivaloyl or benzyl~~

to produce a compound of formula III or a salt thereof:



III

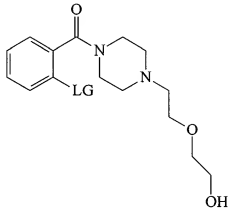
in which R_1 is defined as above,

which on removal of R_1, yields the compound of formula I or a salt thereof.

2. (**Currently Amended**) **[[**A**]]** The process according to claim 1, wherein ~~where~~ compound of formula I is further reacted to a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

3. (**Original**) The method of claim 1, wherein the cyclization is carried out using phosphorus oxychloride.

4. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the compound of formula II or a salt thereof is obtained by coupling of 2-aminothiophenol with a compound of formula IV or a salt ~~thereof,~~ thereof:

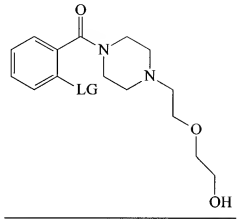


IV

wherein LG represents halogen, diazonium, trifluoromethyl, O-p-toluenesulfonyl, O-trifluoromethanesulfonyl or O-methanesulfonyl, and

reacting the resulting intermediate with at least one reagent providing at least the protective group R_1, and optionally R_2.

5. **(Withdrawn – Currently Amended)** The compound of formula **[[**IV,**]]** IV:

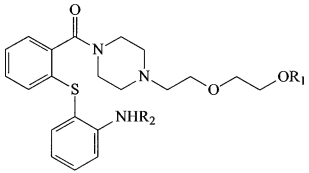


IV

wherein LG is I or Br.

6. **(Withdrawn)** [2-(2-amino-phenylsulfanyl)-phenyl-{4(2-(2-hydroxyethoxy) ethyl] piperazin-1- yl} methanone.

7. **(Withdrawn - Currently Amended)** The compound of the following formula:



~~wherein R_1 and R_2 are defined as in claim 1.~~ wherein R_1 is a hydroxyl protecting group selected from the group consisting of acetyl, benzoyl, pivaloyl, benzyl, 4-methoxybenzyl, allyl, tetrahydropyranyl, silyl, alkyl carbonate, aryl carbonate, aralkyl

carbonate, benzyl carbonate, allylsulfonyl, benzylsulfonyl, and toluenesulfonyl, and

R_2 is H or a suitable amino protecting group.

8. (**Withdrawn**) The compound of claim 7, wherein R_1 and R_2 are both acetyl.

9. (**Withdrawn**) The compound of claim 7, wherein R_1 is acetyl and R_2 is H.

10. (**Withdrawn**) (4-[2-(2-acetyloxyethoxy)ethyl]-1-piperazinyl] dibenzo [b, f]-1, 4-thiazepine.

11. (**New**) The process of claim 1, wherein R_2 is the suitable amino protecting group selected from the group consisting of acetyl, pivaloyl and benzyl.

12. (**New**) The compound of claim 7, wherein R_2 is the suitable amino protecting group selected from the group consisting of acetyl, pivaloyl and benzyl.